

Mark 14:43-52 Our King Was Betrayed With a Kiss Falls Ch. PM 8/25/2024
So far in Mark chapter 14, we have been studying The Passover.

Up until now, the focus was the group of the disciples 1) their attitudes toward Jesus, 2) what Jesus is to do for them, 3) their vulnerability, and the 4) their unpreparedness for what is to follow.

In our passage all of that had changed. Jesus had been in the Garden of Gethsemane with 3 disciples. When Judas arrived to Gethsemane, the focus was no longer on the disciples. The disciples fade out and before the end of our passage tonight, the disciples were all geographically separated from Jesus for the rest of the story. From now on, Jesus will be in the company not of His supporters, but rather of His enemies. Also from now on, rather than Jesus continuing to take the initiative, Jesus becomes the passive victim. Jesus spoke less often, and with fewer words. As Jesus said in verse 41, the hour had come for Jesus to be delivered into the hands of sinners.

The activity of our passage could be summarized in 3 words: Jesus was abandoned. Why? That question brings us to the main point of this sermon: **Our King Jesus is righteous, yet He endured betrayal and loneliness for the sake of us sinners.**

1. The deceitfulness of the kiss. (v.43-45)

There was no narrative break between verse 42 and verse 43. In fact, there was a strong connection. It was "...while [Jesus] was still speaking" the words of verse 42 that Judas came.

The first thing to notice is that Jesus knew! Jesus was fully aware of and prepared for what was coming in the actions of Judas. Consider again the words of Jesus back in verses 41 and 42, when Jesus came a third time to the sleeping disciples and said, '*Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, My betrayer is at hand.*'"

Jesus knew! Jesus was ready. Jesus allowed the kiss to happen!

Jesus did not merely teach "*love your enemies*," but Jesus also lived out that love. If we are betrayed, we may feel entitled to hate others, but we are called to do the same thing as Jesus did here. We must not hate our enemies, but rather love them. How? The lesson of Jesus is that we strengthen ourselves with prayer and submission to God's will, and reach out to those who deceive us.

Jesus knew that He would be abandoned. Jesus knew that He would be arrested. Jesus knew that He would be killed. Jesus knew that He would rise again. How did Jesus know? The Scriptures! Jesus knew the Scriptures. Consider verse 27, where Jesus told the disciples what would happen, and where Jesus quoted the prophet Zechariah, "Jesus said to them, 'You will all fall away, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.'"

It all started with Judas. Judas was essential. Without Judas, there was not a way that the leaders could arrest Jesus during the feast, (14:2), without resulting in an uproar from the people. Judas was needed as a connection to the group around Jesus and a connection to the Jewish authorities.

Perhaps worst of all the layers of abandonment was the deceptive method by which Judas betrayed Jesus, the method which has become famous. The kiss of death! The kiss of Judas was a horror. It was a calculated degradation of a pure sign of respect for His teacher. Judas was killing Jesus, killing the God-man! and Judas was even killing himself, which Judas would literally do in a short time. Think of it – why didn't Judas just point to Jesus? It was the sign of devotion that Judas used to betray Jesus! That was dark and dishonest of Judas. Why did Mark write in verse 43 that Judas was “*one of the twelve*”? we readers already know that. It was not written solely for information and identification. It was for emphasis of the darkness of the deed being even darker because it was one of the few trusted close companions of Jesus who turned on Him.

The list in verse 43 shows that this was not a random group, but rather was an officially sanctioned arresting posse, listen to how Mark wrote it, “*from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.*” Judas came along with a crowd that had been sent from the three constituent groups of the Sanhedrin: the chief priests, the scribes of the law, and the elders. This group was Jewish temple security and authorities, and not the secular Roman authorities. So far, there is no reason for the Romans to be involved yet. The temple security were a substantial force, organized and weaponized in a military fashion, complete with officers known under military titles, such as “*captain of the temple.*” (Acts 4:1). A detachment of these guards had been ordered to go with Judas to make the arrest of Jesus, and to bring Jesus back to the temple.

So, here came Judas and “*with him a crowd with swords and clubs.*” And then the kiss. Actually, the kiss was a typical greeting for students to their rabbi. The deception was in the fact that the kiss would not be suspected for what it really was – a betrayal. But a disciple was not permitted to take the initiative in greeting his teacher. The kiss of Judas was a calculated insult. But Jesus allowed it.

Notice the concern of Judas here. Judas gave instructions to the guard. Judas expected resistance. Judas did not know His Rabbi very well. Listen to what Judas said to the armed guards, “*The one I kiss is the man. Seize Him and lead Him away UNDER GUARD.*” Judas wanted to prevent an escape from Jesus, or interference by the other disciples, at least one of whom was armed with a sword!

Look at verse 45, when Judas arrived “*he went up to [Jesus] at once.*” As Judas approached Jesus, it was then that Judas spoke to Jesus and said, “*Rabbi*” and Judas kissed Jesus. In that moment, our king was betrayed with a kiss.

2. The forcefulness of the arrest. (v.46-47)

The temple guards actually did lay their hands on Jesus. They actually did use force to take Jesus into custody. Jesus did not escape. The disciples did not intervene in such a way as to preserve the freedom of Jesus from being taken.

In verse 47, despite the plausible kiss that itself would not rouse suspicion, and despite the attempt at quietly arresting Jesus by stealth, there was still an eruption of violence when the arrest by force actually happened. V. 47, “...one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear.”

All four Gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John - each record the memorable event during the arrest of Jesus of the cutting off of the ear of the servant of the High Priest. Only the Gospel of John supplies the names of both the servant and the disciple who cut off his ear. It was Peter. And the servant's name was Malchus. This fellow was not just any servant. Verse 47 revealed that he was “*the servant of the High priest,*” which suggests an important person. In fact, perhaps Peter attacked him because he was in charge of this arresting group.

3. The completeness of the defection. (v.48-52)

Jesus spoke up about the unnecessary force and nighttime secrecy, since Jesus had always been so readily available in the daytime in public in the temple surroundings. Jesus had been daily teaching in the temple area.

The statement of Jesus had no effect on the arresting officers. It was not meant for that. Rather, it was a message to His disciples to know that Jesus was not intending to resist, but rather He was prepared to be arrested, and go to His death.

This was the moment for the disciples to step up and fulfill their own promises of loyalty and commitment. In verse 31, Peter had “...said emphatically, *‘If I must die with you, I will not deny you.’*” And they all said the same.”

It was time for that commitment! This was the moment, disciples of Jesus!!

But the seven words of verse 50 report all we need to know about the resolve of the disciples, “*And they all left Him and fled.*” The words of verse 50 drive home like hammer blows the failure of each and every disciple, without exception. What we have in verse 50 is the complete forsakenness of Jesus.

The moment that Jesus showed the most resolve and commitment was the same moment that the disciples all left Jesus and ran away! How can that be? Because the Scriptures must be fulfilled. “*Strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered!*” Zechariah 13:7. There is only one Shepherd. The disciples are not shepherds. They were sheep. The sheep were scattered. All of them. This was a complete abandonment. A complete defection.

Another man was described further in verses 51-52. If this anonymous young man could escape, surely Jesus could have escaped, but Jesus remained committed to allowing Himself to be arrested. In addition, this young man was described in order to add yet more to the sense of the abandonment of Jesus. It was

not only the disciples who left Jesus and fled, but even this anonymous sympathizer left Jesus and fled.

The young man represents you and me. If we think that we would be more loyal than Peter, more loyal than the other disciples, more loyal than this strong young man, we need to have our pride stripped away.

The young man would rather escape naked than be arrested with Jesus. Everyone abandoned Jesus. He was deserted by everyone. So many people had alleged that they were loyal to Jesus, but none of them were. You would have abandoned Jesus too. In fact, we actually have abandoned Jesus. None of us have been always loyal in every moment to Jesus.

Why are we shown these strange verses about a young man, running away naked? To remind us of something important about ourselves and about Jesus. We will all run away. Only Jesus will not. Jesus submitted Himself to the will of His Father in Gethsemane, and later at Calvary. Jesus did not run away from what we deserve, so that we will receive mercy for running away. There is forgiveness for our betrayals.

In the first garden, Adam said, My will, not yours be done. And we all plunged into sin and running away naked from God's will. In the second garden, Jesus said, Your will, not mine be done. And the redemption began. Adam in Eden ran from God's will, and brought death. Jesus in Gethsemane stayed on the path of God's will, and began new life. Jesus suffered alone, in order to grant us forgiveness for abandoning Him.

1 John 1:8-10, *"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleans us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."*

Jesus forgives. When Jesus sent His Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, it was Jesus who was not with a metal sword, but preaching the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God in Acts 2:36-38, *"Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins...'*

Jesus forgives. It is possible that some of these very people in this arresting group were later convicted by God of their sins of arresting an innocent man during the preaching of Peter on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2. How could the members of the arresting group be forgiven? In the name of Jesus Christ!

Concluding applications:

1) Remember that the kingdom of our King Jesus is a kingdom not of this world.

John 18:36, *“My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But My kingdom is not from the world.”*

This comment from our King about His kingdom takes us back to the gospel and the main point of this sermon, which is, **“Our King Jesus is righteous, yet He endured betrayal and loneliness for the sake of us sinners.”**

The cause of truth does not need to use force in order to maintain its cause. The cause of the gospel is not spread by the sword. The cause of Jesus and the kingdom of our King moves forward in the power of The Holy Spirit, and how that Spirit influences the hearts and minds of men and women.

2) Remember that Jesus was wronged, so that he could die for the wrongs of others.

Jesus is the opposite of a robber. Jesus is a giver. A robber is a taker. A robber takes what is not his to take. Rather, Jesus gives. Jesus gave what was His to give. His life. He gives us grace, He gives us forgiveness, He gives us resurrection life. On the cross, there was a robber hanging next to Jesus, who had taken what was not his to take. That robber died because of his own sins. Jesus had no wrongs of His own. Instead, Jesus died for the wrongs of others.

3) Remember that all things surrounding the cross of Jesus happened exactly according to God’s Word.

Jesus said in verse 49, *“Let the Scriptures be fulfilled.”*

There is no accident or chance in any part of the final days of the earthly ministry of Our Lord and King Jesus Christ. The steps that Jesus walked from Gethsemane to Calvary were all marked out by God hundreds of years before. Psalm 22 was literally fulfilled. For example, Psalm 22:11, *“Be not far from Me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help.”* And again Psalm 22:16, *“...a company of evildoers encircles me...”* Isaiah 53 was literally fulfilled. For example, Isaiah 53:12, *“...He was numbered with the transgressors, yet He bore the sin of many...”*

We are called to follow Jesus and rest our very souls in the fact that all that happens to all of God’s children is ordered by our Heavenly Father, and superintended by God’s almighty power and wisdom. There is a mighty hand above us, moving the vast machinery of the universe, and causing all things to work together for our good and for His glory. The very Scriptures themselves are being fulfilled.